

BABU

of "Red-shirts"; many of the English papers imagined they were Bolsheviks, which they were certainly not. This movement among the Pathans on the Frontier province frightened the Government and it was ruthlessly repressed. Special police were brought in and a virtual reign of terror begun.

The deplorable conditions of the peasantry in U.P., to which I have referred, led to a no-rent campaign, while the continuance of terrorism in Bengal had resulted in the promulgation by the new Viceroy of special ordinances of the most comprehensive kind. It was to these conditions that Gandhi returned; the truce was over. He had not been back long before he was once more behind prison walls. At last the country was weary and crushed. In 1934, after his fast, Gandhi was released from jail. It looked as if the Congress was considerably weakened.

The cause of Gandhi's fast has been rather misunderstood in the West. Many have thought that he was protesting against the Untouchables getting certain rights under the new Constitution, whereas his intention was to get them accepted within the Hindu fold without any distinction. By labelling them "depressed class/" or something else, the evil would be perpetuated. The whole country was horrified by this "fast unto death" and, under stress of emotion, temples were opened to the Untouchables and inter-dining took place. Finally, a compromise was reached and the Poona Pact ratified. This made considerable concessions and was not liked by the Sanatanists (orthodox).

Old Pandit Malaviya, the President-elect of the banned 1933 session of the Congress, had said that there were at an estimate nearly 120,000 persons, including several thousands of women and quite a number of children, in prison during the previous fifteen months. The Government had hoped to crush the Congress within six weeks, but fifteen months had not sufficed nor would twice the period. This was the